



# National Park Service

## Ellis Island Junior Ranger Activity Booklet

### Welcome to Ellis Island!

This activity book contains activities for you to complete as you explore the museum.

### What's a National Park Doing in New York Harbor?

National Park sites are located in every state in the U.S. except Delaware. They come in all shapes and sizes and are as different from one another as we are. Ellis Island was declared part of the Statue of Liberty National Monument in 1965 by presidential proclamation. The Main Building was carefully restored during the 1980s and opened as an Immigration Museum in September of 1990.

In caring for America's special places, the National Park Service (NPS) has a very important role. This has been the mission of the NPS since this agency was created in 1916, even though Yellowstone was designated as the world's first National Park decades earlier, in 1872. As Junior Park Rangers, you play an important part in our mission.

Since that time, the National Park System has grown to include over 80 million acres of land in 49 states, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the District of Columbia. These include many different types of sites such as: national parks, monuments, memorials, battlefields, historic sites, recreation areas, rivers, lakeshores and seashores, scenic trails, preserves, military parks, and parkways, just to name a few.

**Can you name any NPS sites?**

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### MISSION OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

"To conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."



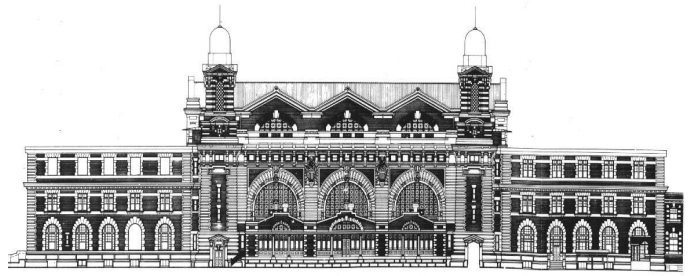
To become a Junior Ranger at Ellis Island

1. Pick up a brochure at the Information Desk and look at the exhibit map of Ellis Island. This will show you the three floors of exhibits.
2. Complete the activities in this booklet and bring it to the Information Desk in the Baggage Room on the 1st floor.
3. Talk to the Ranger at the Information Desk and receive your Junior Ranger badge.

Have Fun!



# About Ellis Island:

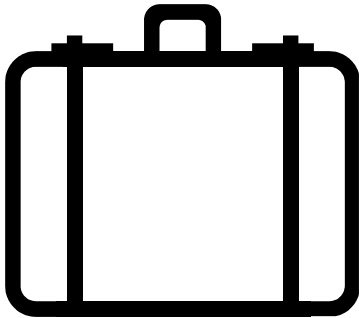


Named after Samuel Ellis, one of the last private owners of the island, Ellis Island was the first federally operated immigration station. It opened in 1892 and officially closed in 1954. During that time, over 12 million immigrants were processed here. Today a large part of the population of the United States can trace a relative who came through Ellis Island. The Immigration Service also operated more than two dozen other immigrant stations around the country. However, the majority of immigrants entered the United States through cities along the east coast since most traveled from Europe.

All immigrants arriving through the Port of New York were not required to go through Ellis Island. Only third class and steerage passengers were required to be inspected at Ellis Island. First and second class travelers, having more wealth, were not seen as much of a risk as those poorer immigrants who traveled steerage and third class. As these immigrants walked through the doors of Ellis Island, they entered the baggage room, each bringing with them different possessions, skills, and hopes.

## Explore the Baggage Room on the First Floor

If you were leaving your home forever, what would you bring with you to the New World?  
Try to limit it to 10 items; remember, you will have to carry all the items you choose to bring.  
Use the space below to answer.



_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

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## Now travel up to the Third Floor

### Treasures from Home:

Compare the items in your list above to those found in the “Treasures from Home” exhibit. Are any items the same or different from the items on your list?

Same

Different

_____
_____
_____
_____

_____
_____
_____
_____

## Ellis Island Chronicles:

Ellis Island, a small island in New York Harbor was only 3.3 acres in size until the 1890s. For hundreds of years it was used by Native Americans to gather oysters for food. Over the years, Ellis Island changed in name and usage. Go to the “Ellis Island Chronicles” exhibit (3rd floor) and search for some of the other names of this island. List them below and the reason why it was called that name.

Name	Reason
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

The island was eventually owned by Samuel Ellis, a businessman and landowner. Mr. Ellis owned the island from the 1780s until his death in 1794. It was then transferred to the State of New York until it was ceded to the federal government in 1808.

What was placed on Ellis Island during that time? \_\_\_\_\_

Much of Ellis Island is made up of landfill. When the federal government became responsible for processing immigrants in 1890, it chose Ellis Island as the location for the nation’s first federal immigration station. The island was expanded with landfill and the original complex of wooden buildings opened to immigrants on January 1, 1892.

Where did most of the landfill come from? \_\_\_\_\_

What happened to the original buildings on June 15, 1897? \_\_\_\_\_

When was the current red-bricked building opened? \_\_\_\_\_

When did Ellis Island close as an immigration depot? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Restoring a Landmark:

In 1965, Ellis Island was included as part of the Statue of Liberty National Monument and placed in the care of the National Park Service. During the 1980s, the Main Building was restored at a cost of \$160 million. It opened on September 10, 1990 as a museum. Look through the “Restoring a Landmark” exhibit and list some things that were restored.

_____	_____
_____	_____



Now that you are finished on the Third Floor, continue down to the Registry Room on the Second Floor



## Through America's Gate: The Medical Exam

The U.S. Public Health Service conducted the physical examinations for immigrants on Ellis Island in the Registry Room. Doctors watched as the immigrants walked up the stairs from the Baggage Room. The exam lasted only seconds. If an immigrant showed an outward sign of illness or injury, which could prevent them from earning a living, then he or she would be detained and possibly excluded from entering the United States.

**Find the Medical Inspection room in the "Through America's Gate" exhibit on the west side of the Registry Room. List and discuss the symbols used to indicate medical conditions on immigrants that passed through Ellis Island.**

	Symbol	Condition
1.	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____

**Name some conditions you would look for today and assign each one a code.**

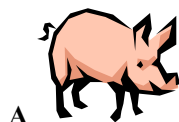
1.	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____

**Mental testing was often conducted to make sure that immigrants did not have any disorders. This test is a sample!**

(Immigrants had 3 minutes to complete a series of tests like this without further instruction)

**NOTE:**

If an immigrant failed the mental test three times, then that person was deported for having a mental illness!



**Bonus question: Why do you think the test did not have any written instructions?**  
(answer on back page)

**Legal Inspection:**  
**Look at the questions listed on the Manifests in the Registry Room and answer them below. For help, revisit “Through America’s Gate” exhibit or join a Park Ranger tour. List your answers to the manifest below.**

U.S.Department of Labor  
Immigration Service

SALOON, CABIN, AND STEERAGE ALIENS MUST BE COMPLETELY INSPECTED

THIS SHEET FOR STEERAGE PASSENGERS

Page

1. (Number on list.)

2. Name in Full

3. Age

4. Sex

5. Married / Single

6. Occupation

7. Able to Read / Write

8. Nationality

9. Race

10. Last Residence

11. Name & Address  
of relative in native country

12. Final Destination

13. (Number on list)

14. Whether having a ticket to  
final destination.

15. By whom was passage paid?

16. Whether in possession of \$50.

17. Whether ever in U.S. before.

18. Whether going to join relative;  
if so, list name and address

19. Ever in prison, almshouse,  
institution for care of insane etc.

20. Whether a Polygamist.

21. Whether an Anarchist

22. Whether coming with an offer,  
promise, or agreement of labor.

23. Condition of Health

24. Deformed or crippled

25. Height

26. Complexion

27. Color of eyes/hair

28. Identifying marks

29. Place of Birth  
Country:  
City/Town:

Hint: The most important questions were  
# 2, 6, 15, 16, and 22.

1. assigned by steamship company

11.

21.

2.

12.

22.

3.

13. assigned by steamship company

23.

4.

14.

24.

5.

15.

25.

6.

16.

26.

7.

17.

27.

8.

18.

28.

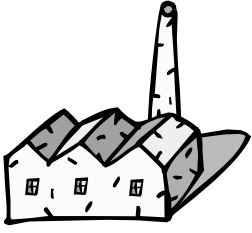
9.

19.

29.

Comments:

## Peak Immigration Years:



After leaving Ellis Island, immigrants had to find ways of supporting themselves and their families. Where ever immigrants settled, the desire for a better life was the leading focus for millions. It was this ideal that began the immigrant process all together.

While some immigrants sought their fortune and others struggled, many immigrants found themselves at the crossroads of becoming “American” while keeping their traditions and culture alive. Long hours, low pay, and poor working conditions caused immigrants to question the American dream of a better life. The new “American worker” was both liked and hated at the same time, and offered an easy excuse to anyone who wanted to blame the immigrant for the country’s problems. These stumbling blocks just made the immigrant worker work harder and become Americanized that much quicker.



**A.** In the “ At Work In America” room in the “Peak Immigration Years” exhibit, look up to find the average wage for each of the 6 jobs listed:

Cigar Maker (per day)	_____	Garment Worker (piece worker)	_____
Bricklayer (per day)	_____	Domestic (per week)	_____
Laborer (per day)	_____	Mill Hand (per day)	_____

**B.** In the same room, look at the chart of what immigrants did in 1900 and find out what types of jobs your ancestors might have done to earn a living. List the top 5 jobs.

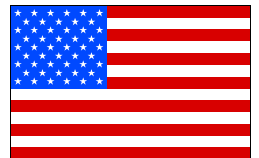
1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**C.** Some immigrants came to America only to work, earn money and eventually return to their homeland. What were these immigrants called? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Citizenship:

Eventually most immigrants would seek the greatest privilege that America had to offer, citizenship. An alien can usually apply for naturalization after 5 years of residency. An immigrant must demonstrate a knowledge of American history and the English language and must not have a criminal past in order to take the test.



Go to the touch screen computer located near the entrance to Theater 2 in the “Peak Immigration Years” exhibit and take the “*Ellis Island Citizenship Test*.”

How many did you guess right?

How many do you need practice on?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

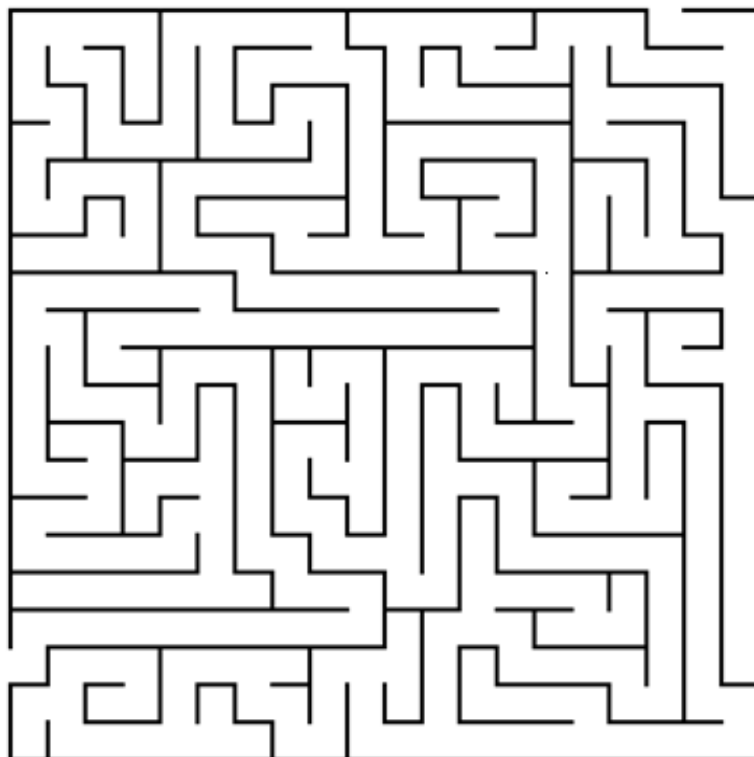
***Continue down to the First Floor to complete Junior Ranger activities***

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## Leaving Ellis Island:

After processing, about two thirds of the immigrants at Ellis Island found their way to the Railroad Ticket Office to purchase a ticket to a destination outside of the New York City Area.

Find the ticket office on the first floor and then solve the maze to bring a family from Ellis Island to their new home.



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*You have completed all the activities to become a Junior Ranger! Talk to a Ranger at the Information Desk to complete your adventure. We hope that Ellis Island has left you wanting to know more about your own family history.*

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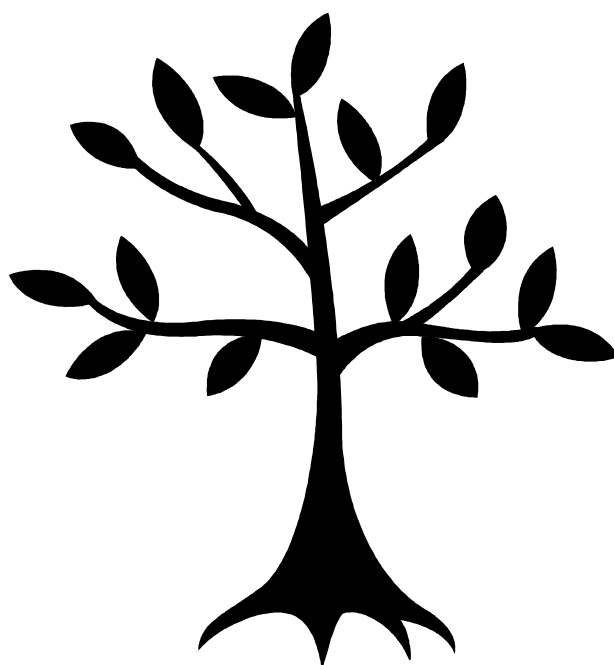
## Ellis Island Legacy

The United States is a nation of nations. Both today and in the past, people left their homeland for a new life, facing an immigrant experience. Many of the arguments for and against immigration have their roots in the past, yet resonate in today's news. That is the legacy of Ellis Island.

Knowing about our family and where we came from can tell us who we are. The best way to start is to ask questions. You can start here by recording information about yourself and, when you get home, asking questions of your immediate family. Create your own family tree!

### How to Start

Ask plenty of questions. Interview family members and list important things about them. Include more than just information about dates and places of birth. Ask about significant family events and record that too!



THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT

-----  
Name

HAS COMPLETED THE REQUIREMENTS TO BE A

**JUNIOR RANGER**

**AT ELLIS ISLAND**

As a Junior Ranger, I promise to help preserve and protect the Statue of Liberty NM, including the Ellis Island Immigration Museum and other National Parks so that they can be enjoyed by future generations. I will do this by sharing what I learned today with others. I promise to continue to discover, explore, and learn about other National Parks and the National Park Service. I also promise to have fun being a National Park Service Junior Ranger.

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National Park Service Ranger

Stamp

Answer to bonus question on page 4:

*A graphic test did not rely on any language. There were so many languages spoken on Ellis Island, a graphic test saved time. Also, immigrants were not required to be able to read and write as a condition of entry until later years.*